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HOUSE MEMORIAL 84

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SERVICE TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR INCLUDING A WOMEN'S RESTROOM OFF THE HOUSE LOUNGE.

WHEREAS, the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States constitution has never passed, which is a disgrace in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has always been more progressive on this issue, having passed its own constitutional amendment in 1972, even before it ratified the United States constitutional amendment; and

WHEREAS, the designers of the capitol renovation, which occurred in 1992, were apparently unaware that New Mexico is an equal rights state because they did not provide for the equal right to restroom space on the first floor for men and women

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1 legislators; and

2 WHEREAS, the number of women legislators has almost
3 doubled since 1992, and the trend is expected to continue; and

4 WHEREAS, perhaps the designers possessed too little
5 imagination about the role women would play in the New Mexico
6 legislature, or perhaps all of the designers were men; and

7 WHEREAS, in any case, there is only a gentlemen's area off
8 the house lounge, and women representatives are forced to go
9 around to the senate side to use the gentle ladies' room; and

10 WHEREAS, often, the gentle ladies of the house are forced
11 to choose between comfort, even health, and voting because
12 there is no women's comfort station accessible from the house
13 lounge; and

14 WHEREAS, the situation is decidedly unequal;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative
17 building services department and the legislative council
18 service be requested to develop a plan for providing access for
19 both women and men from the house lounge to their own separate
20 comfort stations; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, if access is not provided by
22 the time of the special legislative session later this spring
23 or by the next legislative session, the legislative building
24 services department convert the house lounge men's room to a
25 women's room; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if full and fair access cannot
2 be achieved through an additional restroom or the redesign of
3 existing restrooms to provide equal access off the house
4 lounge, then the speaker of the house should provide for a
5 rotating use of the house lounge bathroom, either annually or
6 for some longer period determined by the body; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, when it is the women's turn,
8 the legislative building services department provide for an
9 attractive cabinet or some other nonpermanent structure to hide
10 the gender-specific wall-mounted appliances; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the legislative building services department and
13 the legislative council service.